

The Spirit of Democracy.

"PRINCIPLES AND MEASURES, AND MEN THAT WILL CARRY THOSE PRINCIPLES AND MEASURES INTO EFFECT."

By JAMES R. MORRIS.

WOODSFIELD, OHIO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 1845.

VOLUME I. NUMBER 45.

THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY

IS PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY MORNING,

BY J. R. MORRIS.

TERMS:—\$1.50 per annum in advance; \$2.00 if paid within six months; \$2.50 if paid within the year, and \$3.00 if payment be delayed until after the expiration of the year.

No paper will be discontinued, except at the option of the editor, until all arrears are paid.

All communications sent by mail must be post-paid.

ADVERTISEMENTS inserted at the usual rates.

[From the Evening Mirror]
A SUPERB POEM.

BY CROLY.

The Turkman lay beside the river;
The wind played loose through bow and quiver;
The charger on the bank fed free,
The shield hung glittering from the tree,
The trumpet, shawm and atabal
Were hid from view by cloak and pall,
For long and weary was the way
The hordes had marched that burning day.

Above them on the sky of June,
Broad as a buckler glowed the moon—
Flooding with glory vale and hill;
In silver sprang the mountain rill,
The shrub in silver bent,
A pile of silver stood the tent;
All soundless, sweet tranquility—
All beauty, hill, and tent, and tree.

There came a sound—"twas like the gush
When night winds shake the rose's bush;
There came a sound—"twas like the tread
Of waves along the valley's bed;
There came a sound—"twas like the roar
Of Ocean on his wintry shore!

"DEATH TO THE TURK!" up rose the yell—
On roll'd the charge—a thunder peal!
The Tartar arrows fell like rain—
They clank'd on helm, and mail, and chain—
In blood—in hate—in death, were twined
Savage and Greek—m-d—bleeding—blind—
And still on flank, and front, and rear
Raged, Constantine, thy thirstiest spear!

Brassy and pale—a type of doom—
Labored the moon through deep'ning gloom;
Down plunged her orb—"twas pitchy night!
Now, Turkman, turn thy reins for fight!
On rush'd their thousands through the dark!
But in the camp a ruddy spark
Like an uncertain meteor fell'd—
Thy hand, brave king, that fire-brand wheel'd!

Wild burst the burning element,
O'er man and courser, flag and tent!
And through the blaze the Greeks outsprang,
Like tigers, bloody,—foot and fang!
With dagger, stab, and fustian sweep,
Dashing the stunn'd and staggering heap—
Till lay the slave, by chief and Khan—
And all was gone that once was nam'd!

A walling on the Euxine shore—
Her chivalry shall ride no more!
There's walling on thy hills Altai!
For chiefs, the Grecian vulture's prey—
But, Bosphorus! thy silver wave
Hears shouts for the returning brave—
The highest of her kingly line—
For there comes glorious Constantine!

[We have never seen the above line poem except in manuscript, and we presume that it is never published in this country. It is not in Croly's two volumes of collected works.]

[From the Saturday Museum.]

THE BENEDICTINES OF ST. NICOLAS LE VIEUX.

Translated from the French of Alexandre Dumas
BY WALTER JONES.

The convent of Saint Nicolas, whose cupola excels in height any of the monuments of the city, is the richest in Catania; it was built about the middle of the last century, from designs furnished by Cotini. The church is remarkable for its strong antique columns, and for a very fine organ which was built by a Calabrian monk, who desired as the only pay for his labor that he might be interred under his *chef d'œuvre*. The garden is also remarkable for the great difficulties overcome in its construction; the bottom is a bed of lava, and all the earth that covers it was deposited there by the hand of man.

The discipline of the monastery of Saint Nicolas was formerly very rigid. The monks were required to live upon Mount Etna at the extreme limit of the habitable country, for which reason their first monastery was built at the edge of the uninhabitable region three quarters of a league from Nicolosi, the last village passed in approaching the crater. But as all things yield to time, the discipline gradually lost its severity. Care was no longer taken to repair the buildings. One or two halls at last sank under the weight of the accumulated snow, and the good fathers built the magnificent chapel of ease of Catania, which they called Saint Nicolas le Neuf. Saint Nicolas le Vieux, now only occupied during the summer, was afterwards abandoned altogether. For three or four years something was said of making repairs which would render it again habitable, but this was deferred from time to time, until at last a band of robbers, a class of persons much less careful of their ease than the monks, seized upon it as a rendezvous. After this, nothing more was said of reoccupying the old monastery, and the good fathers, not caring to have any disputes with such guests, quietly abandoned possession to them.

This gave rise, as will presently be seen, to a very strange mistake.

In 1806, the Comte de Weder, a German of the old school, as his name indicates, left Vienna to visit Sicily; he embarked at Trieste, landed at

Ancona, visited Rome, and stopped only at Naples to procure some letters of introduction, embarked again and landed at Catania.

The Comte de Weder had heard of the monastery of Saint Nicolas, and was aware of the reputation the good fathers enjoyed of possessing among the lay brethren, one of the best cooks in Sicily. He did not, therefore, fail to procure at Rome, from a cardinal with whom he dined at the Austrian ambassador's, a letter of introduction to the superior. The letter was very cordial; recommending the Comte as a pious and fervent pilgrim, and claiming for him the hospitality of the convent for as long a time as he chose to remain.

The Comte was very learned after the manner of the Germans; that is, he had read a great number of old books, entirely forgotten by every other nation on the face of the globe. In consequence of this species of erudition he was able to sustain his assertions, no matter how ridiculous or erroneous they might be, by citing a certain number of unknown names which gave a sort of pedantic majesty to his paradoxes. Amongst these old books he had found a catalogue of all the Benedictine monasteries spread upon the face of the earth, from which he had learned and retained with all the tenacity of a trans Rhenish mind, that the regulations of the Benedictines of Saint Nicolas at Catania, required them, as I have mentioned, to live on the confines of the *regime cultrata*, at the beginning of the *regime nemorosa*. When the mulcteer who was to conduct him inquired whether it was to Saint Nicolas le Neuf or to Saint Nicolas le Vieux that he wished to go, the Comte responded without hesitation, *San Nicolo su l'Etna*.

There was no ambiguity about the order, but the mulcteer seemed to hesitate, and hazarded some remonstrances to which the Comte replied only by saying that he would be well paid for his services. The habitual power of this argument is well known. The mulcteer left the Comte, and in half an hour returned with his mules.

"Well," said the Comte, "when shall we set out?"

"When you please, your excellency."

And the travellers started on their journey.

They were soon overtaken by the night, which was so dark that they were unable to see four paces from them; but as the mulcteer was well acquainted with the country, there was no danger of losing their way. He took a little blind path which struck off from the main road and commencing to leave the cultivated region entered into the forests. After about half an hour's travel a black mass loomed up before them, and the windows of a huge pile could at last be distinguished from which no light poured out its friendly gleam.

"There is Saint Nicolas le Vieux," said the mulcteer in a low tone.

"Ah! ah!" said the Comte, "there is a monastery in a very melancholy situation."

"If you desire it," said the guide quickly, "I will conduct you to Nicolosi, and if you do not wish to sleep at the tavern, there is an excellent gentleman there, M. Gamellaro, who will not refuse you a bed."

"I do not know him; besides, I want to go to Saint Nicolas, and not to Nicolosi."

"Zerullo da tedesco," murmured the Sicilian.

Then whipping the mules they resumed their march, and in five minutes were at the door of this monastery, and there was nothing reassuring about a closer view of the establishment. It was an old building of the twelfth century, upon which was easy to read the ravages of each eruption of the volcano that overlooked it, since its foundation. The dates of all the earthquakes and eruptions were sculptured upon the stone. The ragged outline traced in strong relief upon the blue heaven, now brilliant with stars, showed that a portion was in ruins, but the walls which surrounded the edifice appeared to be well preserved, and pierced as they were with loop holes, gave to Saint Nicolas le Vieux rather the appearance of a fortress than a monastery.

The Comte regarded all with a calm air, and ordered the mulcteer to rap at the door. The latter raised an old knocker half eaten away by rust and time, and struck with all his might. The resounding blows were answered by the clock in the steeple, and almost at the same moment a little window, about ten feet above the ground, flew open. A long suspicious looking iron tube presented itself to the breast of the Comte, and a voice which had in it no holy unction demanded,

"Who is there?"

"A friend," replied the Comte, putting aside the muzzle of the carbine.

"A friend! hum! a friend?" said the man at the window; "how will you prove to us that you are a friend?"

"My very dear brother," again replied the Comte, putting the threatening weapon coolly aside, "I perceive that it is necessary for you to receive strangers with the greatest precaution, and I can not blame you for it; under similar circumstances I should do the same; but I have a letter from Cardinal Morosini for your superior."

"For our captain, you mean," replied the man with the carbine.

"Ah! no, no, for the superior."

"Ah, well, no matter; you are alone?" asked his interlocutor.

"Entirely alone."

"Well, wait a moment—I will come down and open the door."

"Hum! how gratefully the odor of roast beef falls upon my olfactories," said the German, descending from his mule, and sniffing up the fumes which reached him from the monastery.

"Your excellency," said the mulcteer, who had by this time taken down the baggage of the Comte from his mules, "you do not want me any longer?"

"You will not remain then?" said the Comte.

"No," answered the mulcteer, "with your permission, I would rather sleep somewhere else."

"Very well, you can go then," said the Comte.

"Do you wish me to come here for you?" asked the Sicilian.

"No, the superior will send me away."

"Very well. Adieu your excellency."

"Adieu."

At this moment the key grated in the lock, the mulcteer leaped on one of the mules, and taking hold of the bridle of the other, trotted away hastily; when the door opened he was at least fifty steps on his way.

"That smells good," said the German sniffing the odor of the kitchen, "that smells very good."

"Does it?" asked the strange looking porter.

"Yes, it does," said the Comte.

"It is the dinner of our chief, whom we expect every moment."

"I have arrived in good time then," said the Comte laughing.

"Why, are you acquainted with our chief?" asked the porter.

"No; but I have a letter to him."

"Ah, that is another thing. Will you let me see it?"

The porter took the letter and read,

"Al reverendissimo generale dei benedictini, al Convento di San Nicolo di Catania."

"Ah! I understand," said the porter.

"You understand, do you? well that is lucky," returned the Comte, slapping him upon the shoulder.

"In that case my friend, I will desire you to bring in my baggage. I must charge you to take particular care of the portmanteau, as I carry my purse in it when I travel."

"Ah! your purse is in the portmanteau, is it?" said the porter, picking up the article in question with a remarkable degree of haste; then, taking possession of the rest of the baggage, "yes, I see that you are a friend, so follow me."

The Comte did not require a second invitation, but kept close to the heels of his guide. The interior aspect of the monastery did not present a less strange appearance than the exterior. All was in ruins, but what was most remarkable, there was no appearance of crucifix or holy images; although scattered here and there were a number of empty casks. The Comte expressed his astonishment at the appearance of so great devastation.

"Why are you surprised?" responded his guide, "we are a little isolated as you have been able to discover; the mountain is covered with those who fear neither man nor the devil, and we do not feel disposed to allow them to carry off what little we do possess. All our precious articles are locked up in the vaults. You know, too, that we have another monastery in the plain near to Catania."

"No, I did not know it. You have another monastery there?"

"Yes. Examine your baggage well, so that you may be able to attest to the chief that nothing has been taken from it."

Oh, that is easily done, one trunk, one sack and a portmanteau; which list I again commend to your especial care."

"Three articles only, I believe, is that all?"

"Why, that's enough, I think?"

"Well, wait here," said the porter, showing the Comte into a kind of cell; "I do not think it will be more than a half hour before the chief returns."

With these words he turned to go.

"Stop, stop. Whilst I am waiting I might as well go down to the kitchen, I think I may be able to give your cook some good advice."

"Well," said the porter, "I see no objection; wait here a moment till I secure your baggage, and I will take you down: apropos, how much did you say in your purse?"

"Three thousand six hundred and twenty ducats."

"Three thousand six hundred and twenty ducats!" Good," replied the porter.

"He has to me the air of a very honest man," murmured the Comte looking at the brother as he went away with his property. "He has to me the air of a very honest man."

In ten minutes after his guide returned.

"If you wish to go down into the kitchen," said the Sicilian, "you are now free to do so."

"Yes, I should greatly prefer waiting here the return of your superior," replied the Comte.

And he followed his guide who conducted him to the kitchen of the monastery. Here the Comte found spits, stoves, and stew pans in full operation.

"Good," said the German, stopping before the last and taking in at a glance the whole of the succulent spectacle—"good; bonjour, cook, bonjour!"

The cook had been apprised of his intended visit, and he received the Comte with all the deference due to such a distinguished epicure.

The Comte, profiting by his condescension, went to the stew pans, raised their covers and tasted all the sauces. Suddenly he rushed toward the cook who was about to put some salt in an omelet and took from his hand the vessel which contained the eggs.

"Stop! stop! what are you going to do?" cried the Comte.

"How? what am I going to do?" asked the cook.

"Yes, what are you going to do?"

"To put salt in the omelet."

Salt! unhappy wretch! Do you not know that it is ruinous to put salt in the omelet? sugar, sweetmeats, good sweetmeats only are proper for that purpose."

"Give it to me then," said the cook endeavoring to take the utensil out of his hands.

"No! no!" said the Comte, "I will make the omelet—give me the sweetmeats."

"Ah!" said the cook, who was becoming enraged, "we will see who is master here!"

"I am master," said a rough voice; "what is the matter here?"

The Comte and cook turned round; a man of apparently forty to forty five years of age, dressed like a monk, was standing upon the staircase; he was of tall stature, and his countenance had that hard and imperious expression common to those who had been accustomed to command.

"The captain!" cried the cook.

"Ah!" cried the Comte, "you are the superior. How d'ye do superior," continued he, advancing toward the monk. "I beg your pardon, but you

have a cook who does not know how to make an omelet."

"You are the Comte de Weder, Monsieur?" said the monk, in very good French.

"Yes," replied the Comte, without relinquishing the fork or the eggs which he was making ready to beat. "Yes, I am the Comte de Weder in person."

"Then you brought the letter of introduction I took from the brother porter?"

"Myself."

"You are welcome, Monsieur le Comte. The Comte bowed.

"I regret very much," continued the monk, "that the isolated position of our monastery, will not allow us to receive you in better style; but we are poor anchorites of the mountains, and you will pardon us, I hope, if our table is not as well supplied as under other circumstances it would be."

"How! not well supplied? The dinner in preparation, on the contrary, appears to me to be excellent; and when I shall make the omelet with sweetmeats—"

"But, Captain," remonstrated the cook.

"Give Monsieur the sweetmeats, that he may make the omelet as he desires," said the monk.

The cook obeyed without making any reply.

"Now," said the monk, "there is nothing in your way, make yourself at home, and when your omelet is finished, come up, you will find me waiting for you above."

"It is only an affair of five minutes if the cook will follow my directions."

"Do you hear," said the monk to the cook; "obey all Monsieur's commands."

He ascended the stairs, and in two minutes after, the two brothers came down to assist the cook.

The Comte soon triumphantly finished his omelet and went up stairs.

The superior was waiting his arrival, in the midst of the community which was composed of a score of brothers, in a well lighted refectory. A well served table was set out; the Comte was astonished at the luxurious display of silver plate, and at the fineness of the table cloth and napkins. The convent had drawn upon all its secret stores to do honor to the guest. The dilapidated apartment, however, contrasted strangely with this rich display; and a complete arsenal of carbines was arranged arabesquely around the walls.

The Comte took in all at a glance, and could not help admiring the religious self-denial of the good fathers, who, possessing such treasures as were spread out before their eyes, were contented to live like the hermit of Mount Carmel, exposed to the inclemency of the weather. The superior observed his surprised air.

"Monsieur le Comte," said he, smiling, "I once more crave your pardon, for the bad manner and accommodations you find here. The interior of our building has doubtless been represented to you as a paradise; you see how wrongfully we are judged by the world, Monsieur le Comte; when you leave us I hope you at least will do us justice."

"My faith!" replied the Comte, "I see no fault that can be found with the dinner—I have found a well organized pantry and kitchen—if the wine is as good—"

"Oh! make yourself easy about that; the wine is good."

"Ah! well! if the wine is good, nothing more is wanting."

"I am only afraid," added the superior, "that you will think our customs do not much resemble those of a monastery. For instance, we never sit down to table without having each a pair of pistols at hand; this is a precaution we are compelled to observe, to guard against surprises, to which we are every moment exposed, in a place as isolated as this; you will excuse us if, notwithstanding your presence, we keep up our habits."

With these words, the superior drew from his belt a pair of superb pistols, which he placed near his seat.

"Right, right," responded the German, "pistols are the friends of the human race; I have pistols too. Ah! let me see your arms, well it is surprising how nearly they resemble mine."

"Do they indeed?" replied the superior, suppressing a smile, "they are very fine weapons; I had these brought from Germany—you will find they are of Kukeneiter's manufacture."

"Kukeneiter's, is it possible! let me bring mine, which are with my baggage, that we may compare them—mine are from the same shop."

"After dinner, Comte, after dinner. Sit opposite to me there. Do you remember your Benedictine?"

"I knew it once, but really, I have forgotten it now."

"So much the worse," said the superior, "I expected you to say grace; but if you have forgotten it we will pass by the ceremony."

"Oh, very well," said Comte, who did not distress himself much about such matters, when a good dinner was before him, "we will omit it."

And the Comte swallowed his omelet with much apparent gusto, notwithstanding the omission of the Benedictine; the good brothers following his example. The superior pushed a bottle towards him.

"Try my wine, Monsieur le Comte," said he.

The Comte not doubting that it was choice wine, filled the little glass before him; taking it by the stem; held it up to the light for a moment and then sipped it with all the voluptuous slowness of a gourmet.

"It is surprising," said the Comte, after a moment's pause; "I thought I knew the flavor of every kind of wine, but this is new to me—at least it is Madeira of a vintage with which I am unacquainted."

"It is Marsala, M. le Comte; a wine little known, but which deserves to be a universal favorite—Poor Sicily! It possesses a number of treasures unknown to the world."

"What did you say it was called?" said the Comte, pouring out another glass.

"Marsala."

"Marsala! well it is excellent wine, I must purchase some of it—is it dear?"

"Two sous a bottle."

"Two sous a bottle! Why you live in a paradise; I will never leave this place—I will become a Benedictine myself."

"Well Comte, we are ready to receive you into our brotherhood at any time."

"Two sous a bottle," replied the Comte, as he filled a third glass.

"I must forewarn you, however, that it has one defect," said the superior.

"No, no! it has no defect."

"I beg your pardon, it is very strong, and is apt to affect the head."

"Strong, strong," cried the Comte, with a contemptuous air. "Why I could drink a pint of it and not feel the effect any more than if I had taken a glass of gooseberry syrup."

"Well, Comte, help yourself—act precisely as if you were in your own house. I would only say that if you are afraid of it, we have other kinds which are at your service."

The Comte turned to the table, and in virtue of this permission began to eat and drink in true German style. The monks, excited by the example of their superior, not wishing to be left behind by a stranger, put themselves earnestly to work.

They soon broke the religious silence observed at the beginning of the repast, and each began to converse with his neighbor, first in a low tone, but soon their voices rose, and each seemed desirous of drowning the sound of all others in his own.

At the beginning of the second course, they began relating their adventures; and the Comte, from the little Sicilian he understood, thought he distinguished among them the exploits of brigands, of gendarmes, and of nuns carried off. But he was not surprised to hear this; the isolated situation of the worthy Benedictines, and the distance from the city, no doubt rendered them familiar with such scenes. The Marsala was poured freely, and the malvoisie of Lipari were not neglected. "Notwithstanding the Comte's strong head, his vision was becoming confused and his words incoherent. The entertainment was now varied; from the relation of adventures they passed to songs.

The Comte when, desired to enter into the hilarity of his entertainers, sought in his anacronistic repertory for something to add to the general contribution, but he could think of nothing except the "Brigands." Song of Schiller's; he thundered out the famous "Stehlen, morden, huren, bolgen," which appeared to him to be very well received, and to excite universal plaudits. Everything seemed now to him to be turning round. The monks gradually threw aside their religious air, and appeared to act like bandits. Their ascetic countenances seemed to change character, and to be lighted up with a ferocious joy. In a word, the dinner had terminated in a mad carouse. They drank without cessation; and as bottle after bottle disappeared, new supplies were brought from the cellar. Some one at last struck on the table with a bottle, to call for more wine, and in striking overturned the lamp; the table-cloth took fire and communicated it to the table. Instead of attempting to extinguish the flames, chairs and benches were thrown on. In an instant the table was an immense blazing pile of wood, around which the monks, now changed into bandits, were dancing like demons. At last, in the midst of this infernal uproar, the voice of the captain was heard, crying out:

"The nuns! the nuns!"

A general huzza greeted these words; and an instant after, a door was opened, and four nuns were dragged in by four or five bandits; they were greeted with shouts of joy. The Comte saw every thing as in a dream; and it appeared to him as if some superior force fixed him in his seat, and took from him the power of motion, whilst his mind took cognizance of all that was going on around him. The bandits rushed towards the nuns; the captain attempted to make his voice heard, but it was drowned in the general clamor. The Comte thought he saw the captain take up the Kukeneiter's which bore such a strong resemblance to his own; he thought he heard two reports, and shut his eyes blinded with light. He opened them again and saw blood; two brigands fell writhing into a corner, he shut his eyes again without the power to re-open them; his legs were no longer able to sustain him—he fell heavily, dead drunk.

When the Comte awoke it was broad day. He rubbed his eyes and looked around him; he was lying under a tree at the edge of the wood, on his right was Nicolosi, on his left Padra, before him Catania, and beyond Catania the Sea. He seemed to have passed the night on a soft bed of sand, his head supported by his portmanteau; the only curtains to his couch were the blue heavens. At first he could recall nothing, and remained for some time like a man in a lethargy. His mind finally, by a slow and confused operation at first carried him back, and he soon recalled his departure from Catania, the hesitation of the mulcteer; his arrival at the monastery; his altercation with the cook; his reception by the superior; the dinner; the Marsala wine; the songs; the drunken frolic; the nuns and the pistol reports. He again looked around him and saw his baggage; he opened his portmanteau and found in it his portefeuille, his pipe, his bag of tobacco and his purse, which looked as full and round as if nothing unusual had occurred; he opened it with anxiety; it was as full of gold as when he last had seen it, and contained also a letter. The Comte opened the letter quietly, and read as follows:

"Monsieur le Comte—We owe you a thousand apologies for the very unceremonious manner in which we separated; but an expedition of the highest importance made it necessary for us to go at once to Cefali. I hope you will not forget the hospitality you received at the hands of the Benedictines of Saint Nicolas-le-Vieux, and that you will ask Monsiegnor Morosini's prayers in behalf of us poor sinners."

"You will find all your baggage with you, except the Kukeneiter's, which I beg you will allow me to retain as a keepsake. DON GUTAXO, Prior of Saint Nicolas-le-Vieux."

October 16, 1806.

The Comte de Weder examined his money, and did not find an obole missing.

When he reached Nicolosi, he found the whole city in commotion. The old Convent of St. Claire had been broken into, the silver stolen, and four of the most beautiful nuns carried off—no one knew where, the robbers leaving no trace behind them.

Two years after, it was stated in the *Algerneine Zeitung*, that their famous bandit chief, Gutaxo, who had been for some time in possession of the monastery of Saint Nicolas-le-Vieux, upon mount Etna, which he had turned into a place of rendezvous for his band—had been taken, after a terrible combat, sustained against an English regiment and hung, much to the satisfaction of the inhabitants of Catania—from whom he, at last, so far had his audacity carried him, exacted a tribute.

THE CASE OF GOVERNOR DORR.—MOTION FOR A WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS FROM THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES.

WASHINGTON, 25.

SUPREME COURT, DECEMBER TERM.

Tenth day, December 11, 1844.

In the case of the State of Rhode